WHY DID THE NEPHILIM RETURN AFTER THE FLOOD?

THE BIBLE MENTIONS THEM IN NUMBERS 13

THE FALLEN ONES WHO WOULD NOT STAY DROWNED

Bibliographic and Reference Document

Primary Sources · Hebrew Canon · Ugaritic Religion · Second Temple Pseudepigrapha · Targumic and Rabbinic Tradition

A chronological compendium of the works consulted in the construction of the documentary film of the same name. Each source is presented in approximate order of composition, from the Late Bronze Age substrate of Canaanite religion through the Hebrew canon, the apocalyptic literature of the Second Temple period, the Aramaic targumim, and the rabbinic and midrashic tradition, down to the modern critical scholarship that frames them. The aim is not to prove a thesis but to lay the evidence open: to name the texts, date them, and record the precise function each performs within the narrative, so that any viewer may weigh the witnesses and read them directly rather than take the film on trust.

Chronological order · Approximate period · Notes on narrative use

Introductory Note

This document gathers, in approximate chronological order, the primary and secondary sources that underpin the documentary film *Why Did the Nephilim Return After the Flood? The Bible Mentions Them in Numbers 13*. Each work was chosen not only for its historical weight but for the specific contribution it makes to the central problem the film investigates: the collision, within the Hebrew canon itself, between a flood declared to have erased all flesh and the reappearance of the Nephilim — the fallen ones — standing alive in Canaan generations later. The narrative treats this contradiction as a tribunal, summoning four competing traditions to testify: that the spies' report was a slander, that one giant survived upon the ark, that the giants returned not as flesh but as spirit, and that the land itself was a reliquary of the deified dead.

The datings follow the majority academic consensus, with reference to recent critical scholarship in biblical studies, Second Temple literature, Jewish pseudepigrapha, classical midrash, and the religion of Late Bronze Age Ugarit. Where a work is composed of distinct redactional layers, the period indicated is that of the final composition or of the redaction that gave the work its recognizable form. Roman numerals mark the chronological sections; the sequence numbers cited within each entry refer to the five movements of the film.

This compendium is intended as a point of departure for the viewer who wishes to go deeper into the original texts. It does not replace direct study of the sources; it offers a chronological map of the traditions that sustain the narrative — and a record of how, and where, each one was used.

I. The Ugaritic Substrate — Late Bronze Age Canaan (c. 14th–13th century BCE)

The pre-Israelite layer in which the term that the Hebrew Bible will later use for the giants of Bashan — Rephaim — already names something else entirely: the deified heroic dead, summoned upward by the living and feared as powers beneath the soil.

c. 14th–13th century BCE

The Rephaim Texts (KTU 1.20–1.22). Fragmentary tablets from Ras Shamra (ancient Ugarit) describing the *rpum* — the deified, departed heroes — invited up to a banquet lasting days. Establishes that *Rephaim* originally named not a race of monsters but the mighty dead. Cited in Sequence V. Critical edition: del Olmo Lete & Sanmartín, in the standard KTU corpus.

c. 13th century BCE

Funerary Liturgy of the Royal Dead (KTU 1.161). A ritual summoning the old royal shades (*rpum*) of the underworld up to a banquet and seating a newly deceased king among them. Cited in Sequence V as the clearest witness to the cult of the deified dead. Critical edition: Dennis Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, 2002.

c. 13th century BCE

The Throne of Rapiu (KTU 1.108). Names the divine Rapiu, lord of the shades, enthroned "at Ashtaroth, at Edrei" — the exact pair of cities the Hebrew Bible assigns to Og of Bashan, last of the Rephaim. Cited in Sequence V as the seam binding the giant-king to the lord of the dead.

II. The Hebrew Canon (c. 950–400 BCE)

The redactional layers of the Torah and the prophetic and wisdom books that establish the framing paradox — a total flood and a post-flood reappearance — and that quietly carry the double meaning of the word Rephaim.

c. 950–500 BCE

Genesis 6:1–4. The *bene ha-elohim* (sons of God), the daughters of men, the Nephilim and the *gibborim*, the men of renown. Cited in Sequences I and IV for the decisive clause *we-gam aharei-khen*, "and also afterward," which opens the whole investigation. Critical edition: Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.

c. 950–500 BCE

Genesis 7–8 (the Flood Narrative). The destruction of all flesh; the verb *mahah*, to wipe clean; the threefold insistence on the eight souls. Cited in Sequence I as the totality the paradox confronts — and for the conspicuous fact that the text never once states that the giants drowned.

c. 8th–6th century BCE

Numbers 13:32–33. The twelve spies return from Canaan with a *dibbah ra'ah*, an evil report; they name the sons of Anak "who come of the Nephilim" and confess they felt as grasshoppers. Cited in Sequences I and II as the canonical reappearance and as the philological tell of the slander.

c. 7th–6th century BCE

Deuteronomy 2–3. The catalog of giant peoples — Emim, Zamzummim, Anakim, all reckoned among the Rephaim — and Og of Bashan with his iron bedstead, nine cubits by four (Dt 3:11). Cited in Sequences II and III as the material exhibit that the slander reading cannot explain.

c. 6th century BCE

Joshua 10–15. Og enthroned at Ashtaroth and Edrei; Anak, his father Arba, and Kiriath-arba (later Hebron). Cited in Sequences III and V for the geography of the giant peoples and its overlap with the Ugaritic record.

c. 6th–3rd century BCE

Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah (the Rephaim of the grave). Psalm 88:11; Proverbs 9:18 and 21:16; Isaiah 14:9 and 26:14 — where the same consonants that name the giants name instead the shades of the dead. Cited in Sequence V for the double meaning that folds the mystery back upon itself.

III. Second Temple Literature and Pseudepigrapha (c. 300 BCE–100 CE)

The period of intense apocalyptic production in which the silences of Genesis were filled with detailed elaborations on the Watchers, the giants, and — decisively — the fate of the unclean spirits after the judgment of the waters.

c. 3rd century BCE

The Book of the Watchers (1 Enoch 1–36). The oldest Enochic stratum: the descent on Mount Hermon in the days of Jared, the forbidden teachings, and, at the climactic center of the film, 1 Enoch 15:8–12 — the declaration that evil spirits "came out of" the bodies of the dead giants and remain upon the earth, bodiless and unkillable. Preserved whole in Ge'ez; in Aramaic among the Qumran fragments. Critical edition: George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, Hermeneia/Fortress

Press, 2001. Central to Sequence IV.

c. 2nd century BCE

The Book of Jubilees (chs. 5, 7, 10). An expansive rewriting of Genesis. Jubilees 10 — central to Sequence IV — records Noah's prayer that the unclean spirits afflicting his grandchildren be bound, and the divine concession leaving one tenth of them under the chief Mastema, to work their will among men. Critical text: James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, Peeters, 1989.

c. 2nd century BCE

The Book of Giants (4Q203, 4Q530–532, 6Q8). Aramaic Qumran fragments in which the giants — among them Ohyah and Hahyah — recount dreams of their own coming destruction. Cited in Sequence IV as the witness in which the giants themselves speak. Critical edition: Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran*, Mohr Siebeck, 1997.

c. 3rd–2nd century BCE

The Septuagint (Genesis). The Alexandrian Greek rendering of the Torah, which translates Nephilim as *gigantes* — binding the Greek and the later Western imagination to the picture of "giants." Cited in Sequence I. Reference: Rahlfs–Hanhart, *Septuaginta*.

c. 2nd century BCE–1st century CE

Aramaic Enoch Fragments at Qumran (4Q201–202). The oldest physical witnesses to the Watchers tradition, recovered from Cave 4. Cited in Sequence IV for the dating of the Enochic material. Edition: J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, Clarendon, 1976.

IV. The Targumic Tradition (c. 1st–8th century CE)

The Aramaic paraphrases read in the synagogue, which supply the connective tissue binding the giant Og to the flood narrative through a single charged word.

c. 1st–8th century CE (final form)

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan (Genesis 14:13). Renders the nameless "fugitive" of the Hebrew, *ha-palit*, as Og — "the one who survived from the giants who died in the flood." Cited in Sequence III as the thread that ties the giant-king directly to the hull of the ark. Translation: Michael Maher, *The Aramaic Bible, vol. 1B*, Liturgical Press, 1992.

c. 1st–5th century CE

Targum Onkelos. The authoritative, more literal Aramaic rendering of the Torah; relevant for its restrained handling of the giant terminology. Cited in Sequence III as a point of comparison with the expansive Pseudo-Jonathan.

V. Rabbinic and Midrashic Tradition (c. 2nd–9th century CE)

The classical sources that resolved the paradox by saving a single body — and that read the spies' grasshopper simile as a confession of overreach.

c. 3rd–6th century CE

Babylonian Talmud (Niddah 61a; Zevachim 113b; Berakhot 54b). Og counted among the survivors of the flood; the debate over the manner of his escape clinging to the ark; and the objection to the spies' claim to know how they appeared in the giants' eyes. Cited in Sequences II

and III.

c. 5th century CE

Genesis Rabbah. Aggadic expansion on Genesis 6 and the antediluvian corruption. Cited in Sequences I and III. Edition: Theodor–Albeck.

c. 8th–9th century CE

Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer (ch. 23). The fullest narrative of Og riding out the deluge upon the ark, fed by Noah through an opening and bound by oath to serve him. Cited in Sequence III as the witness whose single body cannot seed a continent of giants. Translation: Gerald Friedlander, 1916.

c. 5th–12th century CE

Numbers Rabbah and Deuteronomy Rabbah. Midrashic treatment of the spies' report and of the defeat of Og. Cited in Sequences II and III.

VI. Modern Critical Studies (19th–21st century)

The essential secondary literature for the historical, critical, and literary understanding of the primary sources listed above.

Charles, R. H. *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English.* 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913.

Collins, John J. *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

del Olmo Lete, Gregorio. *Canaanite Religion According to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2004.

Doak, Brian R. *The Last of the Rephaim: Conquest and Cataclysm in the Heroic Ages of Ancient Israel.* Boston: Ilex Foundation, 2012.

Milik, Józef T. *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976.

Nickelsburg, George W. E. *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.

Pardee, Dennis. *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit.* Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002.

Reed, Annette Yoshiko. *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Smith, Mark S. *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Stuckenbruck, Loren T. *The Book of Giants from Qumran: Texts, Translation, and Commentary.* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997.

VanderKam, James C. *The Book of Jubilees.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001.

Wright, Archie T. *The Origin of Evil Spirits: The Reception of Genesis 6.1–4 in Early Jewish Literature.* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.

Final Note

The film built upon these sources is a work of authored narrative. It does not claim that the traditions assembled here form a single, coherent system, nor that they were ever read together by the communities that produced them. The Ugaritic cult of the dead, the priestly flood account, the Enochic doctrine of the spirits, the targumic legend of Og, and the rabbinic aggadah arose in different centuries, different languages, and different theological worlds. Their convergence in this documentary is an interpretive and literary act — a way of holding four incompatible answers to one question in the same frame — and not a historical or doctrinal assertion that they belong together.

What unites them is only the problem: a flood declared total, and a word — Nephilim — that refused to stay drowned. Each tradition met that problem with the resources its own world afforded, and each saw something real in the ground it examined. The film renders no verdict among them, and neither does this document. It only sets the witnesses side by side.

The reader is therefore invited to go past the narrative to the texts themselves — to the critical editions named above, to the Aramaic of Qumran, to the tablets of Ras Shamra, and to the Hebrew of the canon — and to weigh the testimony directly. The sources are open. The conclusions remain the reader's own.

Reference document prepared as a research complement to the documentary film of the same name.